

Ward 6 Staff



Steve Kozachik
Council Member



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Bonnie Medler



Ward 6 – Newsletter

A Message from Steve JUNE 22, 2011

There was one overwhelmingly large item on the agenda last night, but I don't want it to get lost in the several other very important pieces of your business that we addressed. In addition, I like to use these newsletters as an opportunity to share some off-line sorts of updates – so here you go...

Since before having taken office, I have heard story after story about how prohibitively expensive it is to do business with the City. Permit fees, impact fees, filing fees, easement fees, and on and on. I have on my desk the most recent example of a builder in a residential area who is paying over \$11,000 in fees to build a house. That is driving jobs out of the area and into outlying areas where we lose the tax base, and all that goes along with it. Yesterday, we unanimously pressed very hard on the City Manager and Real Estate Director to take a look at what we're charging and to come back to us by the end of the summer with proposed reductions. Economics 101 – you want less of something, charge more for it. We're making it overly difficult to create jobs in our community by charging excessive fees to builders. By way of comparison, Tempe averages \$750 for their fees, Mesa averages \$500, and Phoenix about \$1,200. Tucson's fees for similar Real Estate services range from \$2,500 up to a non-refundable \$5,000. I advocated that where we incur no annual costs for an easement that we eliminate annual fees (rent) for using our sidewalks and other rights-of-way. We get money back in the form of jobs, sales and income taxes if we make it convenient for businesses to do things such as open sidewalk cafes on our rights-of-way. Let's help that process along. I also advocated that we consider the Tempe model and significantly reduce what we're charging our prospective business operators. Staff will return with a proposal – I am certain that Council will eagerly embrace a proposal that allows us to walk the talk of being business friendly.

A few months ago I brought to Mayor and Council a report from The Seawater Foundation related to use of salt water for agriculture. The concept is in use all over the world and the brains of the work are located right here in Tucson. Yesterday, I asked Dr. Carl Hodges to come in and give us an update on what the Foundation is doing. They're involved in work across the globe but what I'm excited to report is an effort that is taking place in Yuma. The goal is to use seawater to grow fodder crops, increase acreage, divert the freshwater now being used for irrigation back into the CAP, and grow crops that can be used as biofuel to assist in pumping the water up from Yuma to the Tucson area. This idea can change our whole outlook when it





Important Phone Numbers

**Tucson Police
Department**
 911 or 791-4444
 nonemergency
**Mayor & Council
Comment Line**
 791-4700
**Neighborhood
Resources**
 791-4605
Park Wise
 791-5071
Water Issues
 791-3242
**Pima County Animal
Control**
 243-5900
Street Maintenance
 791-3154
**Planning and
Development
Services** 791-5550
Southwest Gas
 889-1888
**Gas Emergency/
Gas Leaks**
 889-1888
**West Nile Virus
Hotline**
 243-7999
**Environment
Service**
 791-3171
Graffiti Removal
 792-2489
AZ Game & Fish
 628-5376

Continued: A Message From Steve

comes to water as a scarce resource vs. water as an abundant resource. Also, along the lines of the fees I mentioned above, it's about job creation. A true win-win as it rolls out.

Here's one of the "off-line" updates that I'm happy to report. Last year I made an unsuccessful effort to get TPD and DOT to increase the duration of amber lights at photo radar intersections by one second. This was done in order to cut down on the number of citations issued due to people getting caught in "no man's land" while making a left turn. The conversation has been a continuing and intermittent one ever since. Just this week staff has finally agreed to increase the amber arrow time interval (that follows the green arrow) by half a second. This should allow those who are beyond the stop bar, but not within the statutory definition of the intersection (i.e. the prolongation of the cross street curb line), to enter the intersection before the all-red. This is similar to adding the "grace period" that I asked to have considered. Hopefully this will help address the issue. One small step and yet one that I am hopeful yields positive results both in terms of unwarranted citations and with the related public relations boost. I thank staff for continuing to consider my pestering of them.

Another "off-line" item that I'd like to share is my thanks to Cox Communications for sitting down with the people from Access Tucson and discussing the on-going license renewal talks going on between Cox and the City. Access Tucson is legitimately concerned over its own future viability and Cox was good to have taken the time to reach out to explain some of what the City can and cannot offer in the license package. Cox has invested over a billion dollars statewide in infrastructure over the past five years of our license with them. They are a \$250M payroll that employs over 3,000 workers in Arizona. Tucson is one of the Cox markets that has the greatest upside potential. I am very supportive of the City extending a long term license agreement with them so they have an even greater incentive to continue to invest in our community. I appreciate the willingness they showed in meeting with Access and I look forward to voting in a new and improved license agreement when those "t's" are crossed and those "i's" are dotted. The theme of this newsletter is jobs and Cox has been a provider of those in a big way.

TCC subcontractors still have not been paid, are still owed money for work performed, and are still caught in the middle of a dispute between three entities. Each could easily pay them for their work and so I'm still hammering on this issue and will continue to do so until our neighbors have been made whole by Rio Nuevo, Turner/Sundt, and Garfield Traub. The City cannot step in and pay the bills, but the City can certainly advocate on behalf of them and we will continue to do so. I am in pretty regular contact with principals from both the contractor group and from Rio. I have also written to the State legislature and to the Governor. It is wrong for these local companies to be left holding the bag and that message will continue to go out until the situation is made right.

Certainly this item also falls under the umbrella of the jobs theme. In this case it's jobs performed, but not compensated for. Think back to the sales job that Garfield Traub was trying to do to get us to fund their hotel. A meeting was called at the TCC in which



Important Phone Numbers

Senator John
McCain (R)
520-670-6334

Senator Jon Kyl (R)
520-575-8633

Congresswoman
Gabrielle Giffords
(D)
(8th District)
520-881-3588

Congressman
Raul Grijalva (D)
(7th District)
520-622-6788

Governor Janice
Brewer (R)
Governor of Arizona
602-542-4331

Toll free:
1-800-253-0883

State Legislators

Toll Free
Telephone:
1-800-352-8404
Internet:
www.azleg.gov

Mayor Bob Walkup
791-4201

City Infoguide
[http://
cms3.tucsonaz.gov/
infoguide](http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/infoguide)

hundreds of workers were called down to hold up signs saying things such as “feed my children” and “we need jobs”. Now that we have this fight going on over payment, we can see the moral fabric of those who used the workers as pawns in an effort to get you, the taxpayers, to fund their hotel. It stinks and I’m not letting go of it until it’s made right. Remember, the Rio Board members are also residents of this community. They should step in and pay the workers (Rio is the owner of the contracts with Turner and Garfield) and just add that amount to the ongoing financial battle in which they’re engaged with their “partners”.

Finally, last night we unanimously adopted the Jefferson Park Neighborhood Design Manual. This was an extremely difficult decision, but one in which I came down on the side of respecting the many, many hours invested in putting this document in place despite the clear need to continue to fix some of the flaws it contains. The need for zoning controls was brought about by the unmitigated building of non-conforming structures in the neighborhood. The structures are not contextually consistent with the surrounding homes, but before tonight, they were legal from a land use standpoint. The Design Manual puts restrictions on the size of new construction. In doing so, it also puts the City at risk of being sued under the voter approved Proposition 207. That was one of my concerns and it remains so. But my questioning of the City Attorney elicited him saying that our chances are 50/50 and that even in a loss there are things we can do to immediately reduce our financial exposure. Another concern of mine is that these restrictions in Jefferson Park will simply shift the problem to an adjacent neighborhood. I credit staff for being totally up front and acknowledging that they have no answer for that, one of the pieces of unfinished business that we’re going to have to keep an eye on in the days ahead. I am not in favor of beginning yet another Design Manual process for any neighborhood until we have the benefit of a legal decision (Feldman’s Design Manual is in litigation and the Zoning Administrator’s determination related to “uses” is also unresolved and headed for court). But last night staff cleared up many of my concerns related to rebuilding of existing historic structures, the ability for somebody to remodel/upgrade their homes despite what appeared to be contrary language in the Manual, and other nuances contained in the new Design Manual that seemed to constitute what I called “not a finished product”. Well, after last night’s vote, the Design Manual is complete and any new construction must be compatible and consistent with the neighborhood.

Now we must begin the serious process of filling in some of the gaps that I fear were left on the cutting room floor. One of the most significant is to continue to advocate strongly for zoning density and mixed uses along our arterials. This is critical to protecting the interiors of our neighborhoods from non-conforming and incompatible building such as was addressed in Tuesday’s vote. It also needs to be clear that the conditions adopted in the Design Manual are going to be applied prospectively; that is, properties that are existing will not be demolished and forced into conformity with these new rules. What is standing was properly permitted and built with the blessing of the City of Tucson. At the time of construction, they were compliant with the rules of the game that were in place. The same as is true with the many historic structures that are still standing in Jefferson Park that would not be allowed to be built according to the rules we just voted into place. We’ll honor the commitments made by the City and protect the private property rights of all parties involved in this issue

One huge such gap is the whole conversation about density along arterials. I have harped over and over about hard zoning the streetcar route, overlays to kick-start building in the downtown area, and how we work preservation and densification into a development model that achieves both. That conversation will become the mantra for this council member in the days and weeks ahead. Based on the conversation we engaged last night, I am confident that mine will not be a lone voice in the wilderness on this topic. All of Mayor and Council want to take serious steps towards doing the things we need to do in order to revitalize our local job base. Zoning decisions that are catalysts for appropriate development will be key to that. So, last night the Jefferson Park neighbors were partying, rightfully so, and I'm here at odds within myself for having both supported what I consider to be the right decision and yet recognizing that there are holes in that dyke that we need to plug or we may regret the unintended consequences that result. Tuesday evening, a good call. Tomorrow, the conversation continues. And to the extent that I have any small bit of influence on developers who might be inclined to litigate over this vote, I simply invite them to the table to try to come up with solutions and try to heal some of the wounds this issue has opened over the past several contentious years.

Final note – I'm in fairly regular contact with many of the Tucson Firefighters. The message from the men and women out on the front line and corroborated by their Chief, is to please refrain from using any fireworks this 4th of July season. Watch the news and you'll see the reason. The agency is already short on staff, so they're not looking for extra work in putting out brush fires, or worse, this holiday. Enjoy the sanctioned events that will occur around town. TFD will be staffing those. Please don't take the chance of adding to that work load and chancing the loss of life and property.

Sincerely,



Steve Kozachik
Council Member, Ward 6
www.tucsonaz.gov/ward6



Meet and Greet with Steve K. at Sir Vezas

Ward 6 Councilmember Steve Kozachik invites the community to a Meet and Greet at Sir Vezas Taco Garage. This event will occur on **Sunday June 26, 2011** at Sir Veza's Taco Garage located at 4699 E Speedway Boulevard, from 1:00-3:00 in the afternoon. Come join the Councilmember and share your thoughts, ask you questions, or simply just listen to what others have to say. All are welcome at this event. This event is designed to allow residents and constituents get to know Councilmember Kozachik and connect with the community.

Also, come and support locally-owned Sir Veza's Taco Garage. This event is done in conjunction with the growing event, Sunday's on the Strip.

Art after Dark – Friday, June 24 at 8pm
Free for Museum members; \$10 for non-members

June's Art after Dark will start off with a performance by Gary Setzer "Supralingual/ Sublingual: The Tongue is the Terrain. At 9:00 the band Discos will perform followed by Pork Torta at 10:00. Throughout the evening enjoy the sounds of Satyr Entertainment, "art-o-matic" art stations where an old t-shirt you bring from home can get a makeover; and get "queened" by Powhaus Productions before having your photo taken in the old-fashioned photo booth. Presented every other month by the Tucson Museum of Art, Art After Dark is when the arts come alive in downtown Tucson. There will be food for purchase and a cash bar. For additional information, please visit: <http://www.tucsonmuseumofart.org/>



Big Cat Birthday – Reid Park Zoo Saturday June 25



Shombay the lion turns three years old this summer, and he's inviting his feline friends—and you—to celebrate with him! Join the zoo on the morning of June 25 for games, giveaways, and birthday treats for our big cats. No registration is necessary. FREE with regular admission, no registration necessary! For more information visit: <http://www.tucsonzoo.org/>

Himmel park Library 50th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, June 25 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Come be apart of story reading, live music performed by youth violin students of Rose Todaro and Rebecca McKee, and a chance to share your story at the "I remember Himmel" oral history booth. To check out the time of all the day's events, visit:

<http://www.library.pima.gov/about/news/?id=3269>



**Cinema La Placita Outdoor Film
 Series presents "QuickSand"
 on Thursday, June 23 at 7:30 p.m.**

To view full schedule visit:

<http://www.cinemalaplacita.com/>

